

Chapter 185: Course of action.

Katrina's POV:

It was such a pleasure to see Hannah struggling with the trouble that I caused in her project. I cannot even explain how happy I was. Nobody at the office suspected that she was guilty of incompetence. They never thought that someone could go to the project and tear it down because they believed in the best of people. But that wasn't me. I was the one who caused the trouble, and I was proud of it. So, in a few days, she would be out of Myers and Stone, and Lorenzo could turn his attention back to me. It was her fault that I was after her after all. She was the one who agreed to go on a date with him. Therefore, she should pay for that. Some people would say that it was insane, but it wasn't insane. I was just trying to protect what was mine by right.

Of course, I was the one who started the rumors. I knew that this story would spread quickly, so when I saw Myers start a certain movement at the company, I told one of the architects who I knew would spread the gossip. In less than half an hour, the whole office knew what had happened and was blaming Hannah for it. She arrived at the right moment because everybody was looking at her and silently condemning her. Now, it was just a

matter of time until she got fired.

But there was something in the back of my mind that was making me worried. I couldn't find my lucky bracelet since that day. I remember arriving at the project wearing it, but I don't know where it fell. But I think that it will be okay. Maybe I had left it in my car or somewhere in my place that I don't remember. I mean, what are the odds that I would lose it somewhere else? And also, even if it was found somewhere else, they could never link that to me. It didn't have a name on it.

Thinking about that, I didn't consider what I did as the perfect crime because I didn't even consider it a crime. It was sabotage, yes, but I wasn't killing anybody or stealing something from someone. I mean, a lot of industries suffer from espionage, and that was what I considered that I was doing. It happens all the time, right?

I knew that I shouldn't have to worry about that, so I decided to instigate some doubt about Hannah's ability to perform her work. This whole episode would make her look incompetent, and incompetent people don't last long in this work. So, now all that I had to do since the news was already spread, was to present the idea that she wasn't fit for the job. I knew that if I made that bunch of gossip at the office talk about what happened, it would be easy for them to make assumptions about this whole thing, and after

that, they would be capable of saying "But who are we to judge her?" So, that was what I started to do.

Hannah's POV:

I kept the bracelet with me and asked the contractor who found it to keep it a secret for now. I wanted to conduct my own investigation. I didn't know why, but I had this feeling in my gut that I shouldn't trust anyone for now, so I decided to tell everything about that when I had further information. Well, at least, I thought about keeping it from everyone at work. But that wouldn't stop me from asking for help from someone who had no involvement with the firm. So, when I finished work that day, I called Ethan.

"Hey, Hannah, what's going on?" he asked.

"Well, everything is fine," I told him.

His sigh of relief was audible. "Oh, that's good," he said. "I was worried about you because I told you all that, but you didn't call me back, so I was wondering if I was completely wrong and I made a big deal because they weren't saying anything," he explained.

"Well, don't worry about that," I assured him. "The company is going to start an investigation about this, and Myers just wanted me to state so he could start from a certain point. But I'll be fine."

"It's good to hear that," Ethan said excitedly.

"Yeah, but there is something that I wanted to talk to you about, and I need some advice," I told him.

"What is it? How can I help you?" Ethan asked me.

"May I go to a place really quick? So, I can show you something?" I asked.

"Sure. Michael is not here with Patricia, though, so we will be just you and me, but if you're okay with that, just come," he said.

"Thanks. I will be there in a few minutes," I told him and hung up.

When I arrived at his place, Ethan was waiting for me. He had just taken a shower, and his hair looked wet. He was wearing relaxed-fit pants, no shirt yet.

"Hey, Hannah, what's up?" he asked.

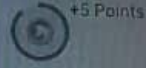
I couldn't take my eyes off his muscular chest. Was he doing this on purpose?

He cleared his throat, and I looked at his face again. He knew that I was staring at him because he had a smirk on his face, and my cheeks obviously burned in shame.

"So, how can I help you?" he asked again.

I told him the whole story, and after that, I showed

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him the bracelet. He took it from my hand and started to analyze it.

"Of course, this is a clue," he affirmed to me. "But you know what?" he asked. "I think you're really lucky to find that," he said.

"Why is that?" I asked.

"It's because there is concrete in that, Hannah. I think that whoever did this didn't have the intention to drop this bracelet. So, you have a clue and practically nobody knows about this. And now you have the chance to investigate quietly," he told me.

Of course, he was stating the obvious because that was my plan from the beginning. But I told him, "Yeah, I thought about that, but I have no idea how to start investigating this without calling too much attention."

Ethan thought for a little bit and then finally said, "I think you should start with some footage. What do you think?" he suggested.

"I think that's actually a great idea. But unfortunately, the mysterious house cameras are off because of the renovation and all the work that we were doing with the walls," I told him.

He frowned a little and said, "Damn it. This was our best guess."

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I sighed, frustrated, and said, "Yeah, I know."

We remained silent for a little bit when he suggested, "Wait a minute. We could always consider the neighbors. I mean, I know that this is a big house, and the owner probably doesn't have a lot of neighbors around, but it's worth it, right?"

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Maybe their cameras spotted something interesting?"

I thought for a little bit and said, "You might be right. I think I will ask the neighbors if they have any information about this."

He nodded and said, "It's probably a good course

of action."

"Thanks for your help, Ethan. Now I have a plan to clear up my name," I told him.

"Well, you know that I'm there for you, right?" Ethan told me again.

"Yeah, I do, and I appreciate you for that," I told him.

"So now, since you're here, would you like to stay for dinner?" He invited me.

I was frustrated and upset with all these things that happened today, but one thing that you can affirm about me is that I was hungry. So, I accepted his invitation and helped him to cook dinner for two.

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On the next day, my footage-gathering work started. I knocked on a few doors, and a few neighbors recognized me from the project. Most of them refused to give me any images that could be helpful, and some didn't even have good material that I could use.

In my quest for footage, I approached Mr. Dawson's house, a neighbor who welcomed me warmly.

"Hey, young lady, welcome, welcome," Mr. Dawson said when he saw me. He was an old man retired

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from an investment bank, seeking nothing but peace in his life. Every day, we exchanged a few words whenever he was walking around the mysterious house in his morning exercise. "How can I help you?" he asked me.

"Well, Mr. Dawson, I wanted to ask you if you had footage from yesterday or during the weekend of the house that I'm working on," I explained.

"You know what? I might have," he told me. "But I don't know how to deal with tech like this," he added.

"Can I take a look?" I asked him with my heart pounding.

He shrugged and said, "Sure! Come with me."

A few minutes later, I was browsing through the videos, rewinding the footage until the weekend. Everything seemed calm for most of it, but then, still, on Friday, I saw it. All the workers left the house, and an hour later, a car entered the site.

Gotcha! I thought to myself.



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